



# Town of Glastonbury

2155 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 6523 • GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT 06033-6523

February 6, 2023

**TESTIMONY IN REGARDS TO HOUSE BILL 6574**  
**AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL YOUTH CAMPS**

To Members of the Childrens Committee,

My Name is Liz Gambacorta, Recreation Supervisor for the Town of Glastonbury. The Glastonbury Parks and Recreation Department serves over 1,400 children in six department operated summer camp programs and various contracted summer camps that are held at eight different community sites in Town, mostly local schools.

The Town opposes the HB 6574 and the potential for municipal run camps to be required to be a licensed youth camp by the Office of Early Childhood. This requirement is an is not only unnecessary since municipal camps already meet high standards to ensure camper safety, it will be an unfunded mandate with increased costs that will be passed off to residents who already face financial pressures in today's economic environment.

The Town of Glastonbury makes camper safety a high priority camper by utilizing other Town agencies and resources available. Such examples are listed below, but not limited to:

- All staff are required to pass a background check by an agency that is less expensive than the agency used by the State OEC and guarantees a 48 hour turn-around-time.
- Ensure all appropriate medical information on campers are received and disseminated to appropriate staff.
- Work with local Health Department, Police Department Social Services Division and Board of Education offices to utilize available resources for formulating policies, assist with staff training, and guidance during situational challenges.
- Camps are held in Town owned buildings, parks and school facilities all of which are inspected by seasoned professionals. Is should be noted that school buildings are already held to a high standard by meeting local Fire Marshal and CT Department of Education requirements.

This bill will be prohibitive by increasing cost and potentially reduce the amount of children served for the following reasons:

- Increasing administrative work and cost to manage licensure requirements.
- Staff requirements for the license will significantly reduce the number of staff which will, in turn, reduce the number of campers that can attend. Post-COVID-19 has already presented hiring challenge; therefore, some camps may close due to lack of staff.
- Many camps are located in the local schools which are managed by the Board of Education, the facility requirements to obtain a license will be impossible to meet.
- The Town has been unsuccessful in finding an APRN the past few years. Under the current language of the youth camp license, the Town camps will have to close.

While we appreciate the Committees efforts to keep young children safe, HB 6574 will not only be a burden to municipalities, but it will severely reduce available low cost options for families who use camps as a form of child care. We encourage the Committee to oppose this bill and work with various municipal officials to help improve the safety and camper experience for years to come.

Sincerely,

Liz Gambacorta  
Recreation Supervisor  
Glastonbury Parks and Recreation